

## **CENTER SCHOOL FAQ**

**8/16/20**

As we are working on the many details involved in planning for a learning model for September there are some frequently asked questions that we can answer now that may be helpful to you and your children. Many of the questions you have or the plans we have been able to make as of today are based on the feasibility study of the Center School logistics and operations.

You are invited to a parent meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 when we will share a brief overview of our progress to date and to take questions and suggestions via chat. I will continue to provide updates throughout the next month to keep you informed and to help your family plan for the return to the school year.

All of our planning is based on following current health and safety guidelines. As new guidance becomes available plans are subject to change.

### **Health and Safety**

#### **Will my child need to wear a mask to school?**

Students are required to wear a cloth mask that covers the nose and mouth to school. If a student forgets their mask or it gets wet during the day, the school will have extra masks available for students. Exceptions may be made for students who are unable to wear their masks due to a medical condition or disability. Parents will be asked to provide written documentation and clearance by the school nurse if an exception is to be made.

#### **Will there be mask breaks?**

There will be mask breaks throughout the day. Teachers will plan them frequently and students may ask for a mask break at any time. There will be no masks worn at lunch once students are seated in their assigned seats. Mask breaks will always be done with social distancing of at least 6 feet.

#### **Will staff be wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when working with students?**

Staff members are required to wear cloth masks that cover the nose and mouth, just as our students do. Some of our staff members who are in close contact with students such as nurses, occupational therapists, special educators, physical therapists, and speech and language pathologists may need to wear additional PPE such as eye protection, gloves and gowns, depending on the nature of the close contact. The PPE is changed after each use and is part of a service that will deliver, wash, and replace PPE on a weekly basis.

#### **What is a medical waiting room and will Center School have one?**

An isolation room is a space that is separate and managed by the nurse in the event someone exhibits COVID symptoms. This allows the nurse to immediately move the student or staff member out of the general population and begin the protocol for COVID scenarios in school. Detailed communication of these protocols for how situations will be handled in school will be communicated with parents prior to the start of school.

#### **Will students get fresh air during the day?**

Students will go outside as much as possible for play and class time. We will have several outdoor locations set up for classes to go including the playgrounds, fields, and courtyard.

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### **Will parents be notified if a student/staff member is diagnosed with Covid-19?**

If your child is impacted in any way-yes. We need to maintain both staff and student privacy/confidentiality at all times around medical information, so you may not be notified of the person affected unless your child is a close contact. Notification of a positive Covid-19 case will be shared with staff/families when appropriate (close contacts).

### **What is a child presents with symptoms that mirror Covid-19 or has allergies that may or may not be COVID?**

In 2020, students (and staff) who are experiencing any symptoms of illness should stay home. All families will be asked to monitor their children each day for specific symptoms: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, sudden loss of taste or smell, congestion and/or runny nose. We are asking staff to do the same and requesting that if symptoms of illness are present, that the individual not come to school that day and to contact their Primary Care Physician (PCP). For recurring, or chronic conditions such as allergies, the school nurse will help determine if it is safe for the child to be in school.

### **Will teachers be tested for COVID periodically to be proactive?**

We are exploring options for staff testing prior to the start of school.

## **Facilities and Operations**

### **Will lunch be in the classroom?**

Based on the guidelines as of today, we are planning for lunch to be held at tables in both the cafeteria and gymnasium. Students will sit 6 feet apart and masks will not be worn during lunch.

### **How long will the lunchtime be?**

Our lunchtime will remain twenty-five minutes. Because we will not be going through a serving line, this may actually increase the actual time students have to eat. More information specific to food services will be forthcoming. It is good to begin thinking about bringing a bag lunch, or purchasing a box or grab and go style lunch at school. We will be using a prepay system only and this is a good time to set up student accounts at [MySchoolBucks.com](https://myschoolbucks.com).

### **Will there be recess?**

Students will have thirty minutes of recess daily, which will look very much like our typical free play recess. In addition we are adding thirty minutes of movement activity to be led by Mr. Lindsey, Ms. Sullivan, or Mrs. Gordon. As part of our recovery of lost skills over time we want to ensure that every student regains physical stamina and strength for a full day of schoolwork as well as socializing outside of the classroom with peers.

### **Will visitors and volunteers be allowed into the building?**

At this time, we are limiting visitors to the building so that we can best manage who is in our building and why. Parents can drop off forgotten items at a table in the vestibule at the main entrance. Students will be notified and we will arrange to get the item to the students. Students who are tardy can check in at the main office. The secretaries will log students in and eliminate the need for a sign-in book.

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### **Will students be able to use the playground?**

Small groups of students will be allowed to use the playgrounds during the school day. Hand-washing or hand sanitizing will occur before and after using the playground area.

### **How will students move about the building?**

Students will be limited to their entrance point and as little movement within their grade level area as needed. Travel will be one way and students will maintain social distancing when moving outside of the classroom. Scheduling is in place to minimize the number of students/classes passing at one time.

### **Will the air quality and HVAC systems be tested?**

Yes. Our facilities department is testing and analyzing all of our ventilation, heating, and air flow systems to ensure proper air circulation, filtering, and function. We have hired an outside engineering firm to support this work, and we will have a full report completed before school opens. If updates to our systems are required, they will be prioritized and resolved ASAP.

### **How will clean be handled in the school?**

Our custodial staff will be working tirelessly day and night to keep each school as safe as possible using the most effective cleaning products and practices. On Wednesdays, each building will receive an extensive cleaning to prepare for the next student cohort. Everyone, including students and staff, will need to do their part to keep their work areas clean and follow all of the hygiene protocols that will be in place.

Items we are working on that are in progress and updates will be sent soon: arrival and dismissal procedures for buses, parent drop off procedures, grade level entrances, etc.

## **Academic Instruction and Support**

### **Will students attend specialist classes?**

Students will have IT, Music, PE, and Art. Our specialist teachers will travel to students and classes will be held in their homeroom. Whenever possible classes will go outside for instruction. Part of our focus this year in PE will be to support social emotional learning in addition to physical activity by following the Second Step Curriculum. Students will have these lessons several times a week and daily movement breaks in addition to recess.

### **What if my child receives special education services?**

Special education services will be scheduled and planned based on current signed IEP service delivery.

A grid services will be conducted during planning time between staff members

B grid services will be in the classroom and the special education teacher will travel to their classroom to provide services.

C grid services are the only services that will be held outside of the classroom. Students will walk to a designated location to meet with their special education provider. The areas for these services have been established to allow for social distancing and

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cleaning of workspaces between students. Students will use only their own supplies, a plastic divider is between the student and the teacher and clear face masks are available as needed for better instruction between the student and the teacher.

Please understand, providing services to our students at the level we expect from ourselves is a work in progress, and improvements will be made as we adjust to our new routines. Education, including special education services, in 2020 will look different than 2019 and prior, but we will be as adaptable and innovative as possible to ensure we are supporting each student with the services they need to be academically and socially successful.

### **What about supplies and materials for students?**

Each student will have their own pencil box with general supplies for daily classwork. In addition, they will have their own container for manipulatives and other curriculum related items for learning. Classroom libraries will remain in tact and teachers will manage the cleaning and distribution of books in the classroom.

### **I am hearing a lot about 'cohorts'. What does that look like at Center School?**

A cohort is how we will be grouping classes so that we keep track of shared time/space between adults and students. Lunches, service providers, traveling in hallways are just a few ways we will look at grouping classes to create cohorts. This is a scheduling Sudoku but will help us with contact tracing or isolating an area or class should there be a COVID scenario.

### **How are the student cohorts being determined?**

Many districts are simply creating cohorts alphabetically - which is a solid way to approach this process and keeps siblings together. However, we are also evaluating other factors as well including transportation, student supports, and educational placement considerations. Cohort assignments will be made available no later than August 31. Due to health and safety requirements,, building capacity, and ongoing staffing plans, individual requests can not be honored at this time.

### **Will my child have access to a Chromebook at school?**

We will be assigning a dedicated Chromebook to each student to use in school on the first day of school. Students will not share technology and students will help to maintain cleaning and charging their Chromebook while at school.

### **How will classrooms be set up?**

As part of our feasibility study to determine the safest use of our classrooms spaces and the most recent guidance from DESE, each classroom has a desk and a chair for each student spaced 3" apart with the option to expand to 6" apart. Students all face in one direction. There is little room for other furniture based on this configuration so we have placed items like tables, extra chairs, etc into storage so that it is available when it is safe to expand the set-up of the classroom.

### **What if my child needs movement or sensory breaks?**

Our Occupational Therapist (OT) is working on a plan so that these breaks previously taken in common areas can be done in the classroom.

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### **Will students have access to printed papers or is everything done digitally?**

Each student will have printed materials for all subjects that are individual and kept in their desk (workbooks, folders, etc). In addition, students will have a Chromebook dedicated to them for their digital work. Based on the feedback from parent and teacher surveys, Google Classroom and some of most effective software will remain components of the learning experience. Time will be spent orienting all students to digital platforms during the first weeks of school.

### **Will there be training on Google Classroom for parents.**

Based on our survey results, some parents were interested in parent workshop on Google Classroom. This is something we are planning in early September for the any parents who may be interested.